

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 635

By Burchett

A RESOLUTION directing the Department of Mental Health to devise and implement a ten-year plan to end chronic homelessness in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the problem of chronic homelessness has long plagued both the State and the nation; and

WHEREAS, the existence of homelessness impacts not only those citizens who do not have access to housing, but also the economic health and quality of life of all Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, many private and public agencies and organizations provide services to the homeless and attempt to address this important societal challenge; and

WHEREAS, the most recent estimates on the number of homeless individuals, released by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, state that there were 9,560 homeless individuals in Tennessee in 2006; and

WHEREAS, of that number, 2,338 were classified as chronically homeless, a state which is defined by being homeless for twelve out of the past thirty-six months; and

WHEREAS, due to the inexact and inherently problematic nature of any survey of homelessness, the number of homeless individuals in Tennessee is, conceivably, much higher than numbers indicate; and

WHEREAS, chronic homeless is a problem which affects all of Tennessee, and should be addressed with unswerving determination; and

WHEREAS, the Cities of Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga have each devised and implemented their own ten-year plans to erase homelessness; the State of Tennessee should adopt the same forward-thinking approach to addressing this widespread problem; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the members of this General Assembly hereby urge the Department of Mental Health to devise and implement a ten-year plan to end chronic homelessness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be delivered to the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health with this final clause omitted from such copy.